

REMARKS

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1 and 13-15 are all the claims pending in the application. Claims 2-12 are canceled by this amendment. Claims 13-15 are added as new claims. No new matter has been added. Applicants note that new claims 13-15 are drawn to the elected invention.

I. Objections to the Specification

The Examiner has objected to the specification for the reasons set forth on page 2 of the Office Action. Applicants have amended the title in order to more clearly define the invention and have also made various editorial amendments to the specification and abstract for grammatical and general readability purposes. No new matter has been added. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw the objection to the specification.

II. Objection to the Claims

The Examiner has objected to claims 1-6 for having errors in English idiom and grammar. In order to overcome this objection, Applicants have amended claim 1 so as address any errors in English idiom and grammar recited therein. Regarding claims 2-6, as noted above, these claims have been canceled by this amendment. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request that the objections to the claims be reconsidered and withdrawn.

III. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Examiner has rejected claims 1-3 and 6 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Nishino et al. (U.S. 5,857,024).

Claim 1, as amended, is drawn to a recording medium holder having a holding unit that is operable to hold one or more portable recording mediums in electrical connection thereto; an input unit operable to receive an input selection from a user; and a selecting unit operable to select, based on the input selection received from the user, one portable medium from the one or more portable recording mediums. Applicants respectfully submit that Nishino does not disclose or suggest at least these features of amended claim 1.

Regarding Nishino, Applicants note that this reference discloses an IC card 30 that includes an input/output (I/O) unit 23, a CPU 34, a clock 42, a keyboard 50 and a display 52 (see Fig. 7 and col. 4, lines 32-37). As explained in Nishino, the keyboard 50 of the IC card 30 is used as an input means for entering a password, and the display 52 of the IC card 30 is used to display data and commands (see col. 4, lines 39-43 and lines 55-59). In Nishino, it is disclosed that a terminal 32A of the input/output (I/O) unit 32 of the IC card 30 can be used to connect the input/output unit 32 to an external device, and that the IC card 30 can be inserted into a card slot of a computer system 10 such that the terminal 32A is connected to a terminal in the card slot of the computer system 10 (see col. 4, lines 59-64).

When the IC card 30 of Nishino is connected to the computer system 10, an authentication procedure is performed as shown in Figs. 2 and 3 (see col. 4, lines 65-67). As explained in Nishino, this procedure may include a password verification routine in which a

password may be input at the keyboard 50 of the IC card 30 when the IC card 30 is input into the computer system 10, such that the input password is compared with a registered password to determine if there is a match (see col. 6, lines 59-67). As disclosed in Nishino, when there is a match, access to the computer system 10 is permitted (see col. 6, lines 52-53 and lines 64-67).

Thus, while Nishino discloses that a password may be input by a user at a keyboard 50 of the IC card 30, Applicants note that Nishino does not disclose an input unit that receives an input from a user for selecting an IC card. Instead, in Nishino, the CPU 12 selects an IC card regardless of the user's input.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that Nishino does not disclose or suggest a recording medium holder that includes an input unit operable to receive an input selection from a user; and a selecting unit that is operable to select, based on the input selection received from the user, one portable recording medium from the one or more portable recording mediums, as recited in amended claim 1.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is patentable over Nishino, an indication of which is kindly requested.

Moreover, Applicants note that claim 1 also recites the features of a judging unit operable to judge whether access is allowed to the digital information stored in the selected portable recording medium; and a displaying unit operable to display the digital information or the index information recorded in the selected portable recording medium when the judging unit judges that access is allowed.

As noted above, Nishino discloses that access to the computer system 10 is permitted when the authentication procedure between the IC card 30 and the computer system 10 determines that respective passwords match. Thus, in Nishino, while it is disclosed that access to the computer system 10 is permitted when the passwords match, Applicants respectfully submit that Nishino does not describe that a judging unit is operable to judge whether access is allowed to the digital information stored in the selected portable medium, as recited in amended claim 1.

Further, as Nishino does not disclose such a judging unit, Applicants respectfully submit that Nishino also does not disclose or suggest the feature of a displaying unit that displays the digital information or the index information recorded in the selected portable recording medium when the judging unit judges that access is allowed, as recited in amended claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that Nishino does not disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious all of the features recited in amended claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claim 1 is patentable over Nishino, an indication of which is kindly requested.

Regarding claims 2, 3 and 6, as noted above, these claims have been canceled by this amendment.

IV. Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 4 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Nishino et al. As noted above, claims 4 and 5 have been canceled by this amendment, thereby rendering this rejection moot.

V. New Claims

Claims 13-15 are added as new claims. Claims 13-15 depend from claim 1 and are therefore considered patentable at least by virtue of their dependency. In addition, regarding claims 13-15, Applicants note that each of these claims recites the feature of a medium-type identification unit operable to identify a medium type of the selected portable recording medium. Applicants respectfully submit that Nishino does not in any way disclose, suggest or otherwise render obvious at least this feature of new claims 13-15.

VI. Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may best be resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,

Shunji HARADA et al.

By: Kenneth W. Fields
Kenneth W. Fields
Registration No. 52,430
Attorney for Applicants

KWF/dib
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
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